

Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program (AFG)



FEMA

**Get Ready Guide
for your Narrative
2011**

Assistance to Firefighters Grants

AFG Narrative Get Ready Guide

Prepare for your application today

The Assistance to Firefighters Grants (AFG) application period will be opening soon! This handy guide will give you a kick-start in prepping your grant application. It will also better prepare you to thoroughly answer the narrative questions as well as your entire application.

The primary goal of the AFG is to meet the firefighting and emergency response needs of fire departments and nonaffiliated emergency medical service organizations. Since 2001, AFG has helped firefighters and other first responders to obtain critically needed equipment, protective gear, emergency vehicles, training, and other resources needed to protect the public and emergency personnel from fire and related hazards.

Be prepared to thoroughly explain, document and provide background information on the following five areas:

- Organization and or/community you serve
- Financial need
- Project description/budget
- Cost benefit
- Statement of effect

The following questions can help you formulate comprehensive answers on your application. Begin your discussion with a brief (no more than three sentences) opening statement as to what you are requesting and why. Then discuss the following:

Organization and or/community you serve

- In your own words, describe your department/organization.
- What are your special needs required to serve your community?
- Describe any special hazards in your community
- What are the demands on your organization based on the needs of the community?
- There is no need to repeat demographic information in this section. It has already been previously captured.

Financial Need

- Why do you need AFG assistance?
- Show current and future department funding issues, if any. Break your budget down showing costs and income.
- Show local funding issues in the community. For example, recent bond proposal rejections, state/local taxing caps. Be specific in referencing these limitations.
- Show local unemployment percentages. Discuss any other local funding issues such as factory, business, or agency closings that show a financial “snapshot” of your area.

Project description and budget

- What are you requesting? Be specific and discuss any and all items.
- Clearly discuss any “unique” equipment requests, such as technical rescue, and why you need the requested items.
- Review the Program Guidance to confirm your requested items are a priority. This will greatly increase your chances for funding.
- Discuss costs for all items. How did you arrive at your costs? Did you “shop around” or did you only use one source/vendor? As stated in the Program Guidance, acquire multiple price quotes.
- Be very clear on how you arrived at the cost figures.
- Is this an “existing” mission or a “new” mission request? Refer to the Program Guidance to clarify this item.

Cost benefit

- Clearly explain why your department needs the grant.
- What is the benefit to your department if the grant is awarded?
- How will the requested items improve fireground operations and/or safety?
- Will the requested items lower your departments’ operating costs or increase them?

- What will the long-term value of the items, if funded, be to your department? What if only part of your request is funded? Will you still accept a partial award?

Statement of effect

- What effect does your current equipment have on fire ground operations and/or safety?
- What effect will your request, if funded, have on future fireground operations and/or safety?
- What effect, if any, will your request have on your future budget?
- Will your request require an increase in your annual operations budget? If so, how will you fund it?
- Will you provide any extra training, if needed, for your requested equipment? If so, who will pay for it? If not, who will provide it?

Vehicle Request

If applying for a grant for a vehicle, the following items must be discussed in addition to the above-mentioned items:

- What do you want to replace?
- Why do you need to replace it?
- Does the current unit meet NFPA standards?
- Does the current unit have an open cab?
- Does the current unit have seat belts/restraints?
- How will the requested unit improve fireground operations and safety to department members?
- Will the requested unit provide new tools/options you currently do not have?
- Have you tailored your request under the “high” priority section for your department’s category in the Program Guidance?
- Are you asking for a “standard” replacement vehicle or one with “high tech” options?
- For aerials, are you replacing a unit or requesting one for the first time?

- If replacing an older unit, justify the need as to why the current unit should be removed from service.
- If asking for a new aerial, justify why you need it. Include any exposures you currently cannot respond to without this type of unit. Discuss the response and types of calls for this type of unit.
- For engine requests, why do you need to replace the current unit?
- Explain call volume to justify the type of unit requested.
- What options will you be requesting on this unit and why? Be very specific. Are you adding options you currently do not have on your older unit? If so, why do you need the new options?
- Discuss your call volume for all types of vehicle requests. For brush units, discuss total acreage responded to, and discuss if the brush unit is a homemade type.
- How many mutual aids per year, on average, would the requested unit respond to, and are any of them automatic dispatch move ups?
- Do you have an NFPA-approved driving program? If not, are you asking for one? If not, why not?
- Do you have entry-level NFPA physicals for all members? If not, why not? As stated in the Program Guidance, both NFPA-approved physicals and driving programs are required for funding consideration.



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Questions regarding the AFG Grants can be directed to the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Grant Programs Directorate (GPD) AFG Program staff at: 1-866-274-0960 or e-mail firegrants@dhs.gov.

Visit www.fema.gov/firegrants/ for more information.

